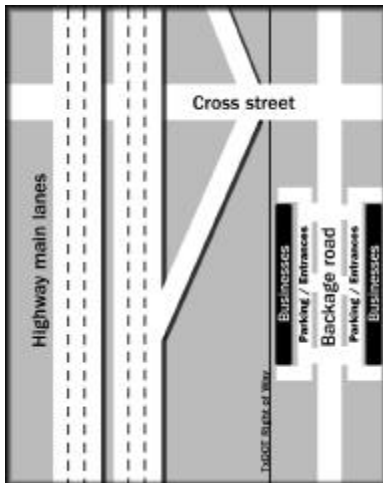
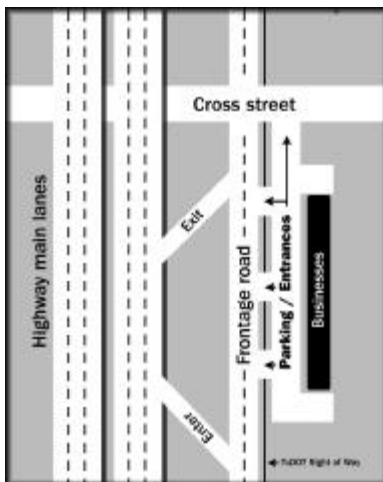


TEXAS FRONTAGE ROAD POLICY

General Information



With Backage Road



With Frontage Road

BACKGROUND

- The Texas Transportation Commission approved a policy (October 1999) limiting the construction of frontage roads along I-69, which extends from the Texas-Mexico border to Texarkana.
- On June 28, 2001, the Texas Transportation Commission approved two minute orders reflecting the change in the Texas Department of Transportation's (TxDOT) policy regarding frontage roads.
- **Minute Order 108544** – sets policy so new controlled access freeways are constructed without frontage roads whenever feasible.
- **Minute Order 108545** – directs TxDOT to work with local governments to determine how best to maintain local traffic circulation when frontage roads are not built.
- On December 13, 2001, the Texas Transportation Commission gave preliminary approval to the proposed rules to implement the revised frontage road policy.

OVERVIEW

- In the past, frontage roads were built when certain criteria were met.
- When planning a new freeway, TxDOT will start with the premise that frontage roads will not be built. TxDOT will then evaluate the corridor to determine whether frontage roads can be supported and what impact frontage roads would have on mobility and safety.
- Regulating access to a highway is termed "access control." Access control is achieved by limiting access rights to and from properties adjacent to the highway.
- In Texas, access control of freeways is accomplished through purchase of access rights or the provision of frontage roads. Frontage roads have long been Texas' preferred solution for controlling access along freeways.
- Access control is important in the development of freeways. A freeway is defined as a main highway with full control of access. Full control of access gives preference to through traffic by providing access connections using ramps with only selected public roads and by prohibiting at-grade or direct private driveway connections.
- Currently, Texas has over 6,481 miles of frontage roads, many of which were constructed to avoid adverse impacts to adjacent properties where existing roadways were converted to freeways.

TEXAS FRONTAGE ROAD POLICY

General Information - page 2

OVERVIEW (continued)

- **Backage Roads** – a term referring to a local street or road that generally runs parallel to an arterial or highway but is not adjacent to the highway right of way. Direct access for businesses or properties located between the highway and the backage road is provided by the backage road rather than the highway.
- Research indicates backage roads provide more access to a greater number of businesses and can increase the value of adjacent land while reducing road construction costs for individual properties.

PURPOSE OF REVISED FRONTAGE ROAD POLICY

- To improve mobility on state highway corridors
- To increase safety of freeway travel
- To extend the operational life of the existing road
- To reduce highway construction and maintenance costs

PROPOSED RULES

- The proposed rules will amend the current rules found in the Texas Administrative Code Section 15.54 (d).
- **Frontage Road Provision** - For new location freeways and relief routes, TxDOT no longer intends to construct frontage roads unless necessary and justified. However, TxDOT may approve frontage roads under the following circumstances:
 - To improve the safety and efficient operations of a state highway corridor
 - To resolve landlocked conditions on certain remaining parcels
 - To restore circulation of local traffic from severed streets
 - If the cost to purchase the access rights would exceed the cost of the frontage road
 - If it is determined to be in the best interest of the state
- **Exceptions** – The Texas Transportation Commission recognizes there are times when frontage roads are necessary to allow for proper operation of the state highway system. If a project does not meet any of the above requirements, a request must be made to the commission.

CURRENT PROJECTS POTENTIALLY IMPACTED

- Projects currently being developed may be affected by the new rules and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.
- Evaluation will include a review of prior commitments or development work based on the previous frontage road policy.

NEXT STEP

In addition to the public hearings, TxDOT will accept written comments submitted by Feb. 4, 2002. Comments should be mailed to Ken Bohuslav, Director, Design Division, Texas Department of Transportation, 125 E. 11th Street, Austin, TX 78701-2483. Following evaluation of public comment, the Texas Transportation Commission may consider the final rules as early as spring 2002.